

A contents-information transmission system includes a contents-information handling apparatus to which one of different levels of at least one of copyright protection and information secrecy is assigned. The system also includes an authentication apparatus. The one of the different levels is transmitted from the contents-information handling apparatus to the authentication apparatus. In the authentication apparatus, a device operates for comparing the transmitted one of the different levels with a predetermined reference level. Transmission of contents information from the authentication apparatus to the contents-information handling apparatus is selectively permitted and inhibited in response to a result of the comparison.